

Application Serial No: 10/712,770
Responsive to the final Office Action mailed on: February 6, 2009

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed on February 6, 2009. Claims 18-24 and 39 are amended into independent form. Claims 3-16, 29-32 and 36 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is added. Claims 18-24 and 39 are pending.

Claims 18-24 and 39:

In the present Office Action, claims 18-24 and 39 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As claims 18-24 and 39 are now amended into independent form, Applicants respectfully request allowance of these claims.

§103 Rejections:

Claims 3-12, 14-16, 29-32 and 36 are rejected as being unpatentable over Iizuka (US Patent No. 6,686,960) in view of Ikeda (US Patent No. 6,423,959). This rejection is now moot as claims 3-12, 14-16, 29-32 and 36 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

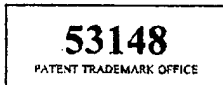
Claim 13 is rejected as being unpatentable over Iizuka in view of Ikeda and further in view of Uya (US Patent No. 7,199,826). This rejection is now moot as claim 13 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

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Conclusion:

Applicants respectfully assert that claims 18-24 and 39 are in condition for allowance. If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' primary attorney-of record, Douglas P. Mueller (Reg. No. 30,300), at (612) 455-3804.



Dated: April 6, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER &
LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902-0902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
(612) 455-3800

By: 

Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300
DPM/ahk